

Character Class

Mystic Theurge - Blurring the Line

By Creighton Broadhurst



This column aims to provide players with tips on creating effective and interesting characters of various types. So, whether you're a beginning player creating your very first character or an experienced gamer looking to put some punch into an old standby, this column is for you.

In the recent [Design & Development](#) column, Reads Good, Plays Bad, Dave Noonan discussed the *DMG*'s mystic theurge, a prestige class offering divine and arcane spellcasting advancement. In his column, Dave defended the mystic theurge's design, while in the following article we delve deeper into playing this prestige class in more effective ways.

Assets

- **Easy Qualification:** It is easy to qualify to become a mystic theurge: you only require six ranks in Knowledge (arcana) and Knowledge (religion), and the ability to cast 2nd-level arcane and divine spells. Therefore, a cleric 3/wizard 3 or a cleric 3/sorcerer 4 could easily qualify for this prestige class. It's harder for a bard to qualify for this class (he needs to reach 4th level to do so, to meet the arcane requirement) but bard/mystic theurges make great support characters fully able to use their bardic music and spells to boost their companions.
- **Spells:** Mystic theurges can cast an awesome number of spells every day. For every level of mystic theurge, a character gains new spells per day as if she had gained a level in any one arcane and divine spellcasting class. For example, a cleric 3/wizard 3/mystic theurge 2 casts spells as a cleric 5/wizard 5. This gives her a lot of flexibility, allowing her to fulfill many roles within the party and act as an excellent back-up to the party's main spellcasters.
- **Good Will Saves:** A mystic theurge uses the best progression for Will saving throws (see Table 3-1 in the *Player's Handbook*). Add to that her arcane and divine caster levels, and she has a truly impressive Will save.

Weaknesses

The mystic theurge's advantages come at a price. Here are a few things to consider when thinking about an exotic weapon master character:

- **Low Hit Points:** A mystic theurge uses 4-sided Hit Dice, making them very vulnerable in a fight.
- **Poor Fortitude and Reflex Saves:** A mystic theurge has the worst progression for Reflex and Fortitude saving throws in the game. However, because a mystic theurge likely has three levels of cleric or druid, her Fortitude saving throw is much better than her Reflex saving throw.
- **Spells:** Although a mystic theurge can cast many spells everyday, she often misses out on the truly powerful spells that prove decisive in battle. For example, a cleric 3/wizard 3/mystic theurge 3 (nine character levels) can only cast 3rd-level divine and arcane spells. A character with nine levels of wizard or cleric, however, can cast 5th-level spells.

- **Poor Attack Bonus:** Mystic theurges have very bad base attack bonuses. This isn't that much of a problem though (except for ray specialists), as they should rarely get into a situation where they need to use a weapon.
- **Loss of Class Abilities:** Although advancing as a mystic theurge grants additional spellcasting abilities in one divine and one arcane spellcasting class, the character does not get any other benefits from those classes. For example, a cleric 3/wizard 3/mystic theurge 2 turns undead as a 3rd-level cleric although she casts spells as a 5th-level cleric. Similarly, if she has a familiar it only has the abilities granted by a 3rd-level master, and not a 5th-level master.

Playing a Mystic Theurge

People who play efficient mystic theurges should keep the following in mind:

It's all in the Class

To become a mystic theurge, you first must take levels in two other classes: one that allows you to cast 2nd-level divine spells and one that allows you to cast 2nd-level arcane spells. These classes define to a certain extent your role in the party.

A mystic theurge should be crystal clear on her role within the party. She is unlikely to be the most powerful spellcaster in the group (unless the group is very small). Thus, she needs to tailor her spell selection to fill any gaps in the party's skill set. Her vast number of spells makes her a very effective and versatile party member able to turn her hand to many tasks. Sorcerers, of course, are less so, but with the right spells they can still meaningfully contribute. For example, a sorcerer/mystic theurge able to cast *bull strength*, *cat's grace*, and so on can give his party a considerable edge in combat. Similarly, the same character could become an effective ray specialist if he had a good Dexterity, Weapon Focus (ray), Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, and was able to cast *ray of enfeeblement*, *scorching ray*, and so on.

The best familiar for a mystic theurge is a weasel, because of the bonus this grants to its master's Reflex saving throw.

Feat and Skill Selection

When choosing feats, make certain that your choices improve as many of your abilities as possible. For example, if you take Spell Focus make sure that it augments both your divine and arcane spell selections. Improved Initiative is also a great feat for a mystic theurge, allowing her to buff her warrior companions before they charge into combat. Also, consider Great Fortitude and Lightning Reflexes to boost your defenses.

Certain skills should be maxed out: Concentration and Spellcraft being the obvious choices. Good Knowledge (arcana) and Knowledge (religion) scores are also useful. If a mystic theurge has levels in wizard, she should take at least one rank in every Knowledge skill. Similarly, a sorcerer/mystic theurge should take ranks in Use Magic Device to increase her (already impressive) versatility with magical items.

Protection and Augmentation

As a mystic theurge, you almost certainly have below average hit points and a relatively low armor class. Similarly, your Reflex and Fortitude saving throws will both be poor. Thus, your first thought should be to defense. Remember, buying several lesser items that bestow different bonus types gives you better protection than one expensive item.

Next, consider how to boost your own spellcasting abilities. Depending on what class levels you took before becoming a mystic theurge you should consider buying any of the



following items: *periapt of wisdom* (for druids and clerics), *cloak of charisma* (for sorcerers and bards), and *headband of intellect* (for wizards). Luckily, all these items fill different body slots. Of great value to mystic theurges are *orange prism ioun stones* that boost the owner's caster level.

Although you can cast lots of spells every day, they likely lack the raw power available to your spellcasting companions. If you use a lot of damage-dealing spells consider buying a *metamagic rod of empower* and/or a *metamagic rod of maximize*. If you prefer to augment your companions buy a *metamagic rod of extend*. Purchase as many *pearls of power* (any usable level) as possible.

Sample Mystic Theurge: Deggum the Outcast

Scrawny and rake thin, this male half-elf has long, lank black hair and deep green eyes. His face is haggard and drawn and he moves with a pronounced limp.

Deggum CR 9

Male half-elf cleric 3/necromancer 3/mystic theurge 3

CE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init -1; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +6, Spot +6

Languages Common, Elf, Goblin, Gnomish

AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15

(-1 Dex, +4 armor, +1 deflection, +1 natural)

hp 51 (9 HD)

Immunes sleep

Fort +7, **Ref** +5, **Will** +13; +2 against enchantment spells and effects

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee mwk morningstar +5 (1d8)

Ranged light crossbow +3 (1d8)

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +4

Special Actions cast evil spells at +1 CL, spontaneous casting, rebuke undead 4/day (+3, 2d6+4, 3rd)

Combat Gear *elemental gem* (fire), 2 scrolls of *cure moderate wounds*, scroll of *expeditious retreat*, scroll of *water breathing*, *wand of fireball* (10 charges), *wand of true strike* (10 charges)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 6th; melee touch +4):

3rd-*contagion* (DC 18), *dispel magic*, *magic circle against good*, *magic vestment*

2nd- *bear's endurance*, *cure moderate wounds*, *death knell* (DC 17), *invisibility*, *owl's wisdom*

1st-*cure light wounds*, *disguise self*, *doom* (DC 16), *obscuring mist*, *shield of faith*

0-*cure minor wounds*, *detect poison*, *guidance*, *light*, *purify food and drink*

D: Domain spell. Deity: Lolth. Domains: Evil, Trickery.

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 6th; ranged touch +3):

3rd-extended *false life** (14 hp), *ray of exhaustion* (DC 17), *extended rope trick*

2nd-*blindness* (DC 16), *extended mage armor**, *fox's cunning*, *scorching ray*, *see invisibility*

1st-*magic missile* (2), *ray of enfeeblement*, *shield*, *true strike*

0-*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

*Already cast

Abilities Str 10, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 13

SA spontaneous casting, rebuke undead 4/day (+3, 2d6+4,3rd)

SQ half-elf traits, weasel familiar, share spells

Feats Craft Wand, Extend Spell, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (necromancy)

Skills Concentration +13, Diplomacy +4, Gather Information +3, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (religion) +7, Knowledge (the planes) +7, Listen +6, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +16, Spot +6

Possessions combat gear plus masterwork morningstar, light crossbow with 10 bolts, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *cloak of resistance* +1, *ring of feather falling*, *ring of protection* +1, silver holy symbol, spell component pouch, 50 pp, 20 gp

Spellbook (barred schools: illusion, enchantment) spells prepared plus 0-all; 1st-*chill touch*, *comprehend languages*, *expeditious retreat*, *hold portal*; 2nd-*ghoul touch*, *spectral hand*, *web*; 3rd-*blink*, *clairaudience*/*clairvoyance*, *fireball*, *vampiric touch*

Deggum is a renegade from the nearby elven forests. Driven out by his kin because of his proclivity for cruelty and evil, he turned to Lolth for succor and has risen high in her councils. He stalks the sunlit lands of the surface as her spy (and occasionally assassin). Deggum is brave to a fault, but is not foolhardy. He much prefers to work through intermediaries and duped mercenaries.

For a look at another alternate elf worshipper of Lolth, check out *Fight Club* featuring [Glythanna](#), the high elf drider.

Deggum had the following ability scores before Hit Dice ability score increases: Str 10, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 13.

Feedback

Have a spell combination you use with the mystic theurge? Any additional advice you would include for this prestige class? (And does the name Deggum the Outcast ring a bell with anyone?) Let us know, at dndfeedback@wizards.com.

About the Author

Creighton Broadhurst is a member of [Living Greyhawk](#)'s Circle of Six and a mad-keen **World of Greyhawk** fan. His hobbies include trying to complete his original *Temple of Elemental Evil* campaign (most adventurers daring that dangerous locale do not survive) and clearing up the devastation left by his two-year-old son (who delights in wielding exotic toys to bizarre and deadly effect).

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